Statement

(a) and (b) Development of horticulture sector was one of the thrust areas during the VIII Plan Period. Considering perishable nature of the horticulture produce, development of infrastructure for post-harvest handling of the produce was, therefore, taken up as a major programme during the Plan Period. The National Horticulture Board (NHB), an organisation under the Ministry of Agriculture provided assistance during the period, for creation of post-harvest infrastructure facilities such as grading and packing centres, precooling units, specialised transport facilities, cold storages and for creation of marketing infrastructure for horticulture produce. These schemes are being continued during the current financial year. The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), another organisation under the Agriculture Ministry, has also been implementing a number of schemes for providing financial assistance for post-harvest operations to cooperatives of fruits and vegetable growers etc. through State Governments for creation of infrastructure facilities for storage, transportation, marketing, processing etc. The Ministry of Food Processing Industry is implementing a scheme for providing assistance for setting up of pre-cooling and post-harvest handling facilities during 8th Plan period from 1994-95 onwards.

(c) The estimated production of major horticulture crops in the country put together during the year 1994-95 was over 1175 lakh MTs from an area of about 131 lakh hectares in comparison to an estimated production of 958 lakh MTs from an area of 125 lakh hectares during 1991-92.

[Translation]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in reply to my question the hon. Minister has mentioned about the schemes launched and facilities provided, for marketing, processing and storage of potato and fruits. A record was set in the production of potato and fruits last year but the storage facility could not be provided therefor. Thousands of acres of unutilised barren land is there in the country. I would like to know whether the Government propose to utilise that land by starting horticulture on it.

[English]

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Sir, the Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Forest Conservation Programme

*282. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :
SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that there has been continuous increase in pollution in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government have formulated any scheme to speed up the forest conservation programme in view of increasing pollution;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which the said scheme is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Yes, Sir, Pollution has increased in the country, mainly due to growing industrial and transportation activities, generation of solid waste and sewage loads.

(b) to (d) There are a number of schemes augmenting afforestation and forest conservation which contribute to abatement of pollution. These schemes include afforestation measures mainly by State Governments under their programmes as well as schemes under various other development programmes including that of the National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board. Also, while according environmental clearance to developmental projects, it is stipulated that a green belt be raised on the site. The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 provides for compensatory afforestation in case of diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes.

[English]

Fish Diseases

*286. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) fish diseases prevalent in the country;

(b) the steps taken to prevent these diseases;

(c) whether the Government are planning to set up research centre for the fish diseases in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) The diseases presently prevalent in fin and shell fish in the country largely relate to bacterial and fungal diseases, parasitic

infections, epizootic ulcerative syndrome and other infections such as white spot and soft shell symptoms. Some of the fish diseases prevalent in the country are given in the Statement attached.

Research on fish diseases has been systematically going on in the Fisheries Research Institutes under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and some of the Colleges of Fisheries under the State Agricultural Universities such as (i) Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture, Chennai; (ii) Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture, Bhubaneswar; (iii) Central Institute of Capture Fisheries Research Institute, Barrackpore; (iv) Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi; and (v) Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai.

Based on the clinical and field level trials, guidelines detailing preventive and therapeutic measures have been issued from time to time. Besides these research institutions also undertake systematic surveys for surveillance and monitoring of the fin and shell fish diseases.

(c) and (d) The research institutions referred to above are already carrying out research on fish diseases. These research activities would be continued and intensified in future.

Statement

Some of the Fish Diseases prevalent in the country

A. Fungal infections

1. Saprolegniasis

B. Bacterial diseases

2. Fin and tail rot
3. Ulcer disease
4. Dropsy
5. Eye disease

C. Protozoan diseases

6. Ichthyophthiriasis
7. Costiasis

D. Worm diseases

8. Gyrodactylosis
9. Diplostomiasis

E. Crustacean diseases

10. Argulosis
11. Lernaeasis

F. 12. Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS)

13. White spot disease
14. Soft shell syndrome

Crop Insurance Coverage

*287. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA :
SHRIMATI KAMAL RANI :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Governments have submitted any proposal to formulate a scheme for providing a free insurance coverage to the agricultural crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) Requests have been received from State Governments to modify the existing Comprehensive Crop Insurance (CCIS) by enlarging the coverage to more crops and non-loanee farmers and reducing the unit area of implementation. No requests for providing free insurance coverage have, however, been received.

Infiltration through Rajouri and Poonch Districts

*288. SHRI RAMBAHADUR SINGH :
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan trained militants have changed their strategy to gain access into the Indian territory to continue their activities in Jammu & Kashmir and are now infiltrating through Rajouri and Poonch districts which were hitherto relatively peaceful; and

(b) if so, the measures taken by the Government to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : (a) and (b) Government are aware of the reports and efforts by the Pak trained militants to use Rajouri and Poonch districts for infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir and to indulge in terrorist activities in these